



## **Glenwood Springs Tourism Promotion Board Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, February 11, 2016 - 2:00-4:00 p.m. Location: City Hall, Council Chambers, 101 8<sup>th</sup> Street**

### **Tourism Board Members:**

Trent Blizzard, Chair, Blizzard Press – Citizen/Resident  
Nancy Heard, Treasurer, Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park – Tourism  
April Carver, Hotel Denver – Lodging  
Don 'Hooner' Gillespie, Balcomb & Green, PC – Citizen/Resident  
Jeremy Gilley, Glenwood Hot Springs – Citizen/Resident  
Doreen Herriott, Garfield County – Citizen/Resident  
Ken Murphy, Glenwood Adventure Company – Tourism  
Suzanne Stewart – GSCRA Board Representative  
Steve Davis – City Council Representative

<b>Tourism Promotion Board Members Present</b>	<b>Tourism Promotion Board Members Absent</b>	<b>GSCRA Staff Present</b>	<b>Guests Present</b>
Trent Blizzard Jeremy Gilley Nancy Heard Doreen Herriott Ken Murphy Steve Davis, City Council	April Carver Don 'Hooner' Gillespie Suzanne Stewart	Lisa Langer Cristin Barta	Samantha Montgomery Solomon Liston

**2:04 p.m., Meeting was called to order by Trent Blizzard, Chair.**

**Approval of Tourism Promotion Minutes – January 21, 2016. Nancy Heard moved to approve the board meeting minutes. Ken Murphy seconded and the motion carried.**

**Special Presentation** – Trent Blizzard thanked outgoing board member Doreen Herriott with a framed certificate for her volunteer service on the board. Lisa Langer will present Don Gillespie and April Carver with their certificates as they were absent at today's meeting.

Lisa announced that city council made new appointments to the tourism promotion board at the February 4<sup>th</sup> council meeting. There were 12 applicants and four available positions. Appointees are: Krissy Clary, owner of Colorado Ranch House; Dorian Ciolek, GM of Best Western Antlers; Troy Hawks, marketing manager of Sunlight Mountain Resort;; and Samantha Montgomery, public information coordinator for the Grand Avenue Bridge project. Since Samantha was in attendance, Lisa asked her to introduce herself to the group.

**Hanging Lake Presentation** – Kay Hopkins, Outdoor Recreation Planner for White River National Forest and Aaron Mayville, Acting District Ranger for the Holy Cross Ranger District, USFS presented the overview and update of 2015 summer season visitation at Hanging Lake. Trail count data reports over 150,000 Hanging Lake visitors in 2015 (data was collected using two trail counters through the calendar year). They also reported that in conjunction with CDOT and the Volpe center things are moving forward toward a solution for this attraction in summer 2017. The upcoming NEPA capacity analysis is a critical piece toward nailing down this long term solution. At the end of the presentation, Kay and Aaron requested that the tourism promotion board give approval for funding a 3<sup>rd</sup> seasonal ranger for 2016 at a cost of \$22,000. Garfield County and USFS has already committed to two 2016 seasonal rangers at that funding level.

**A motion was made by Trent Blizzard that \$22,000 from the tourism promotion reserve fund be allocated to the USFS for a 2016 seasonal employee at Hanging Lake. The motion was seconded by Jeremy Gilley and carried unanimously.**

Lisa will convey this motion to the city clerk and ask that the request be added to the next available city council consent agenda.

**Marketing Updates** – Cristin Barta reported on The Assembly: Managing Our Peaks and Valleys (DestiMetrics hosted summit). While a good portion of the workshop was geared toward ski destinations, there were portions centered on summer tourism and what other areas are doing to enhance their summer markets. Nancy Heard interjected that alpine coasters are being constructed in four ski resorts: Snowmass, Steamboat, Copper and Vail. Another interesting workshop topic was on how various areas of our mountains are being “loved to death.” The takeaway from that session was that while DMO's can help influence the management of community infrastructure, they are not able to manage forest service or BLM land. The other big issue that was expressed by many destinations was lack of affordable employee housing and packaging of activities with accommodations. Cristin also updated the board on the website user testing that was purchased for visitglenwood.com, what was learned from this exercise, and how those items are being addressed.

On the tail end of a discussion of the impact of Air BNB and VRBO, Ken Murphy brought up the need for the tourism promotion board to address Glenwood Springs' funding in terms of marketing dollars. He said that because our growth in hotel rooms is stagnant, we should be looking at other ways to boost our marketing budget. Big picture items include development of a marketing district for a summer activities tax and/or an increase to our current 2.5% room tax. The board asked Lisa to come back with the figures from our mountain competitors as to funding for their marketing efforts. This topic will be discussed during the March board retreat.

Lisa Langer reported on PR that Glenwood Springs has received in the past month as well as hosted media (including two Italian media FAMS). She updated the board on the upcoming Chinese FAM, several Bridge Committee/Stakeholder meetings she's attended since January 1, and the International Sportsmen's Expo that she and Cristin attended in January. Lisa, Vicky Nash and Nancy Heard also hosted Cathy Ritter, the new Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) director during her maiden voyage in Glenwood Springs. The new vacation planner is being proofed and will be ready for print before the end of February. The Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop destinations have been meeting via conference calls and are currently working with the state on a combined video and Colorado.com landing page.

#### **GAB Project Opportunities to Enhance Visitor Experience –**

Cristin reported that a bridge page has been added to VisitGlenwood.com. It features the illustrations of the bridge as well as links to CDOT and Hot Springs Pool shuttle/parking information.

Themes from the partnership meeting held on January 21 were discussed.

- **Map** – Samantha Montgomery reported that her office is working on a map of all the existing parking areas in Glenwood Springs. This map will be printed and also sent digitally to Glenwood Springs businesses. Cristin and Lisa mentioned that optimally, the map would include estimated times to walk from various parking areas, bike and bus routes, as well as illustrations, information and bridge phases. Samantha will provide the initial parking map file so more information can be added. Solomon Liston mentioned that the cartoon map he is producing will also include parking and bridge information.
- **Shuttle Service** – Ken Murphy has been contacted by various tourism attractions about the possibility of providing this service. He found that it would cost over \$40,000 per month to operate 2 shuttles. The conclusion was that it would be better to have the City of Glenwood Springs take over this type of service by revamping the current Ride Glenwood Springs. Steve Davis said that the city is looking at a plan to redevelop the Ride Glenwood bus service.
- **Ambassadors Program** – Samantha reported that her office is willing to spearhead this project in terms of organizing, hiring and training, but would require funding to implement. The board discussed how this program could work. The consensus was that the board would like to see at least eight Ambassadors, two per 8-10 hour shift daily, preferably stationed on either side of the pedestrian bridge at least Memorial Day through Labor Day. The board asked that Kathleen's office work on a budget that Samantha can present at the March tourism promotion retreat.
- **Kiosk** – Cristin will look into the kiosks that DDA has commissioned to find out the size and cost and determine if we should order one for the Glenwood Springs Visitor Center.

- Stimulus Idea – Trent brought up that perhaps we could contribute to certificates/passes for various attractions, activities, and restaurants to bring people back to Glenwood Springs post bridge construction to stimulate the economy. Jeremy Gilley added that perhaps we could use a portion of the reserves for a big marketing push and/or a celebratory event after the bridge is completed.
- Lisa shared the current unrestricted fund balance for the tourism promotion reserves. The total as of 12/31/2015 is \$462,299.48. Lisa emphasized that this amount should not be depleted because it is there for emergencies as well as special projects.

After all the discussion, the Ambassador Program was identified as the top priority along with printing of a cohesive map piece and kiosk signage (perhaps additionally for fencing), along with post-bridge stimulus promotions/celebrations. Samantha's office will provide a budget for the Ambassador program and Cristin will get information about a possible visitor center kiosk.

**Community Space Above Library** – Linda English, CMC VP of Fiscal Affairs, presented the concept of the large meeting space planned for Cooper Commons (second floor above the library at Cooper and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets). The space is almost 12,000 square feet and is currently part of a condominium association. Neither CMC nor the Library had use for the space when the building was constructed. Now they would like to move forward to finish this space and have applied for several grants to help with funding. They held focus groups to determine what the space should be and overwhelmingly heard that there is no viable space in Glenwood Springs to hold groups of 250 or more. So the decision was made to finish the space as a flexible meeting space that can be used by anyone at little or no cost. They believe the capacity will be approximately 450 total. CMC is currently seeking a support letter from the tourism promotion board to accompany the grant for the Federal Mineral Lease District.

The board asked questions about how parking in the area could be impacted with a project of this size. Discussion ensued about the current lack of adequate parking in the downtown core. There were also questions about how the facility would structure fees and concerns over the proposed "no fee" structure. There was discussion about the current properties in town that charge for meeting space including the community center, which is currently struggling with a budget deficit, and how this new "no fee" facility could impact their bottom lines.

Linda said that there are many details yet to be worked out and that it is not the intent of CMC to compete with existing businesses.

**Ken Murphy moved to support the CMC Cooper Commons concept by providing a letter to accompany the FMLD grant. Trent Blizzard seconded. The motion failed 2-3.**

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks** – Nancy Heard brought up the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and lack of fireworks the last few years. Lisa mentioned that the city is looking into fireworks and some other possible celebrations. Jeremy Gilley expressed that Fireworks are the number one requested amenity for Independence Day.

**A motion was made by Nancy Heard that \$20,000 from the tourism promotion reserve fund be allocated to the City of Glenwood Springs for July 4, 2016 Fireworks display. Ken Murphy seconded and the motion carried unanimously.**

Lisa will convey this motion to the city clerk and ask that the request be added to the next available city council consent agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Langer, VP of Tourism Marketing